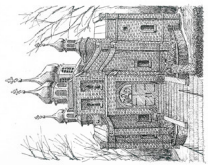
Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
305 Washington Street
P. O. Box 2876
New Britain, CT 06050-2876



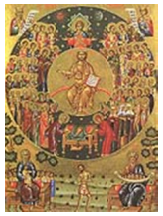
Celebrating our 107th Patronal Festday

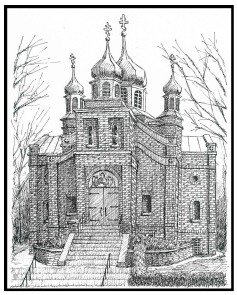
HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

JUNE 2020

HÖLY TRÏNÏTY ÖRTHÖDÖX CHURCH

JUNE 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Zoom "live streaming" Great Vespers 5:00P.M.
7 **HOLY PENTECOST** Zoom "live streaming" Festal Obednitsa & "Kneeling" Prayers 8:30 A.M.	8 Day of the Holy Spirit	9 *Fast Free Week June 7 - 14*	10	11	12	13 Zoom "live streaming" Great Vespers 5:00P.M.
14 1st after Pentecost All Saints Sunday **FATHER'S DAY** Zoom "live streaming" Obednitsa 8:30 A.M.	15 St. Jonah Metropolitan of Moscow ***Apostles Fast June 15 – 28***	16	17 *40th Day for* *Apr. Paul Lazor*	18	19	20 Zoom "live streaming" Great Vespers 5:00P.M.
21 2nd after Pentecost All Saints of North America Zoom "live streaming" Obednitsa 8:30 A.M.	22	23	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist	25	26 Tikhvin icon of the Theotokos	27 Zoom "live streaming" Great Vespers 5:00P.M.
28 3rd after Pentecost Zoom "live streaming" Obednitsa 8:30 A.M.	29 Ss. Peter & Paul "Virtual" Parish Council meeting 7:00 P.M	30				Charity: *Zoe for Life*



Monthly Newsletter of
HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
305 Washington Street • PO Box 2876 • New Britain, CT 06050-2876

www.htocnb.org
JUNE 2020

Re-opening Plan: (Stage 0 and Stage 1 approved by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, Locum Tenens of the Diocese of New England. Stages 2 & 3 when benchmarks are met.)

Stage 0

Plan:
Services are completely suspended; no Divine Services are served
Virtual services hosted through ZOOM

- Saturday 'Readers' Vespers
- Sunday Obednitsa
- Wednesday Prayer Service

Parish Council meetings, education and social gatherings hosted through ZOOM

Benchmarks:
Observe strict social distancing through May 20th per Governor Lamont orders
Review COVID-19 trends for Hartford County, CT on weekly basis
Begin planning for parish re-opening
Send out parish survey to determine parish readiness
Host Parish-Wide ZOOM "Town Hall" following Obednitsa to educate parishioners on Re-Opening Plan

Materials:
ZOOM Pro Licensed Version purchase

Comments:
Holy Trinity will use data from Hartford County as reported by Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center to determine benchmarks for re-opening: https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map

Stage 1

Plan:
Saturday Vespers, Sunday Obednitsa, and Festal Vespers will be served by limited liturgical (maximum 5 people) cohort in Church (*See Note 1). All meetings and social gatherings hosted through ZOOM

Benchmarks:
There must be a 14-Day decreasing trend in new COVID-19 Cases to advance to this stage. We will start tracking from May 20th, 2020
Catalogue all cleaning & sanitizing supplies
Submit Re-Opening Plan to Parish Council for review
Receive approval from Diocesan Authority to enact Re-Opening Plan, Stage 1

Materials:
Acquire necessary PPE

- Masks
- Hand Sanitizer
- Thermometer

Livestream services via ZOOM

Comments:
Fr. David will adjust censing patterns to accommodate social distancing. He will cense the congregation and church from the Ambon/Solea only.
A maximum of two chanters will sing the responses to all liturgical services through Stages 1-3, at the least. We will stay current with trends and research to determine when choral singing may be re-introduced.

Stage 2

Plan:
Sunday Liturgy served by limited cohort with addition of 7 allotted spaces within Church Nave for Parishioners (*See Note 2). All meetings and social gatherings hosted through ZOOM

Benchmarks:
There must be a further 2 week decreasing trend in new COVID-19 Cases from previous stage
Have church thoroughly cleaned
Set up Log System for:

- Attendance
- Cleaning

Determine capacity for 6ft distancing, identify chanter locations, and mark within Church Nave by tape, rope or other measure
Assign Parishioner roles for limited cohort to support welcoming parishioners: Screener/Usher, Candle Lighter, Server.
Develop Signage for:

- COVID Symptoms
- Instructions for Parishioners
- Screening Questions (*See Note 6)

Materials:
Secure iPad for Log-Sheets
Purchase "liturgical spoons"

Comments:
Holy communion will be distributed via approved method by

Archpriest David Koles, Rector
9 Frankie Lane
Terryville, CT 06786
Phone: 860-573-0013
Email: frdavid@htocnb.org

His Beatitude: Fr. David will use one metal spoon per each communicant, which will be deposited into a receptacle, which will be sanitized after each service. Each communicant will have a paper towel which will likewise be deposited in a separate receptacle and burned.
Fr. David will wear a face shield while distributing communion to the faithful.
The Zapivka and Antidoron will not be distributed during Stages 1-3.
Only 1 server will be allowed during Liturgical Services; no children under the age of 12 will be allowed to serve during Stages 1-3.

Stage 3

Plan:
Add 7 more spaces (total of 14) in Church for maximum allotment given 6ft social distancing maintained. All meetings and social gatherings hosted through ZOOM

Benchmarks:
There must be a further 2 week decreasing trend in new COVID-19 Cases from previous stage

Comments:
Continuance of existing precautions and practices.

Notes:
1. Out of pastoral attention and concern for our brethren, we have decided not to serve Divine Liturgy during Stage 1. We believe continuing our current practices during Stage 1 at the Church, facilitates a first-step towards re-opening.
2. We have determined that there are roughly 14 "spots" (not including chanter spots and the choir loft) for Parishioners to safely social distance. These spots do not correlate to people; rather they are designated areas for parishioners to be in. In Stage 2, we will open up half of these spots; in Stage 3, we will then open up the full allotment. This complies with both social distancing, as well as staying below the State threshold of 25% capacity for indoor religious gatherings, or fewer than 100, whichever is lower.
3. In addition to checking temperatures at the door, parishioners will be asked a set of screening questions when the sign up to attend a service, as well as when they enter the building. There will be one designated entrance into the Church, while provided for multiple exit points to comply with Fire Safety Codes.
4. At the discretion of the Pastor, and pending good weather, Holy Trinity will attempt throughout the Summer months to accommodate outdoor Liturgies on the Church property, with the same precautions (screenings, masks etc) and social distancing (spots will be designated) maintained. The Governor has allowed for outdoor religious gatherings under 150 persons.
5. Those who work in healthcare settings where Coronavirus is being treated may not attend services during Stages 1-3. While we encourage those 65+ or who are at higher risk not to attend during these stages, we are not mandating this.
6. Stages 4-7 will be determined as we continue to receive new civil directives and track data trends. At this time, we are not permitting any activities or gatherings within the Church outside of those listed in Stages 0-3.

APOSTLES FAST:

This year the Apostles Fast (which prepares us for the **Feast of Ss. Peter and Paul** and always begins the day after All Saints Sunday) will last for 14 days: June 15-28, ending with Feast Day of Ss. Peter & Paul. We have many Peter's & Paul's who celebrate their Name Day!

The June charity collection is for **ZOE for Life!**

ZOE is a non-profit Christ-centered support organization with three major goals: to help women in crisis pregnancy, to assist Orthodox Christian couples seeking to adopt, and to create an Orthodox Christian abstinence program to educate young people. ZOE serves as a conduit, guiding women to a wider range of support organizations, providing them with a more attractive set of options and hopefully a more promising outlook on their situation. For example, there is financial assistance, housing assistance, medical assistance, prenatal care, adoption services and other services available that are usually unknown to most women in crisis pregnancies.

http://www.zoeforlifeonline.org/

ZOE for Life is an endorsed organization of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of America.

Please use the envelope provided in your monthly mailing and be generous!! Please use the envelope provided in your monthly mailing.

PARISH COUNCIL:

The next meeting of the 2020 Parish Council will be held on Monday evening, June 29th at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom.

Birthdays & Anniversaries in JUNE:

5	Max Kaplan	
6	Amber Fiedler	
6	Mallory Kokus	1987
6	Megan Adams	1989
8	Kaiden Fiedler	2009
9	Sadie Albino	1921
14	Emma Fiedler	2011
18	Rosemary Clark	2018
22	Nika Veek	2017
23	Jason Fiedler	1970
25	Simon Sahin	1962
28	Benjamin Burrill	2010

5	Fr. David & Mat. Melanie	1983
9	Kenneth & Margaret Wagner	2000
13	Michael & Diane Karabin	1970
16	Dan & Jennifer Belonick	2013
19	Chris & Meredith Dresko	2011
20	Scott & Rebecca Ahern	2003
23	John & Rosemary Delaney	1973
28	Joseph & Dorothy Kowar	1964

24 Fr. John Dresko's 1979 Ord. Priesthood

"WHEN I WAS SICK YOU CAME TO ME"

The following parishioners (and friends) are now home-bound or in long-term care facilities. If there are any names missing, please inform Fr. David. The regular schedule of visitations is included on the monthly calendar. Parishioners are welcomed and encouraged to make regular visitations to nursing homes and shut-ins. Our loved ones **NEED** to feel connected to their parish family.

Jerome Home, New Britain
Sadie Albino
Alexander Dubnansky

Monsignor Bojnowski Manor, New Britain
Mary Camarata

The Summit, Plantsville
Nick Tabakow

Grandview Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center [Walnut Hill Care Center], New Britain
Martha Cherpak

Avon Health Center, Avon
Stella Liwen

At Home: Helen Anop, Jim Dounouk, Joseph Kowar, Antoinette Rudy and Katherine Szestakow.

PARISH DIPTYCHS

Please remember our departed brothers and sisters in your prayers.

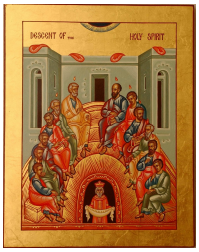
Child Olga Makul	5 mo	June 1912
Ksenia Tynik	83	June 3 1971
Nina Sasiela	81	June 4 1999
Roman Novick	35	June 5 1955
Child Paul Hedza	5 mo	June 6 1910
Caroline Skerpan	97	June 6 2007
Child Mary Avhustinovich	1 day	June 7 1911
Julia Danilevich	29	June 7 1929
Alexander Grigorieff	75	June 8 1947
Alexander Kaminsky	90	June 8 1968
Anastasia Jazkevich	84	June 8 1991
Michael Liwen	90	June 9 1975
Michael Sulima	78	June 10 1974
Dimitri Masuk	20	June 11 1909
Joseph Gelaysin	48	June 11 1933
Natalie Zuk	72	June 11 1984
Mary Roman	96	June 11 2009
Nona Grusha Bissland	76	June 11 2011
Child Mildred Endelev	6	June 12 1914
Michael Augustynovich	85	June 12 1965
Mildred (Nadezhda) Dobrowolski	94	June 12 2008
Nicholas Hamisewicz	98	June 12 2018
Child John Suslimo	2 wks	June 13 1916
Olga Piszko	57	June 14 1956
Child Mary Virshiv	4 mo	June 15 1909
Irene Czerwinski	80	June 15 2006
Irene Cherpak	83	June 15 2013
Child Paul Hritsel	1 day	June 16 1910
Freda Demko	66	June 17 1961
John Steffick, Sr.	96	June 17 1972
Eva Sopko		June 17 1975
Raymond Lestoric	64	June 18 1992
Mary Ludko	91	June 18 2005
George Mazuruk	74	June 19 1949
Mary Pobrezny	63	June 19 1960
Stephanida 'Stella' Potvin	78	June 19 2009
Jacob Zaretsky	22	June 20 1911
Mary Kovalchuk	24	June 20 1911
Anna Gadovska	18	June 20 1911
Eleanor Ludko	51	June 20 1967
Child Agaphia Solov	2 mo	June 21 1908
Anastasia Hordeya	22	June 21 1913
Basil Somnin	31	June 21 1913
Agaphia Dimnitch	98	June 21 1993
George Fedak	92	June 21 2009
John Steffick	88	June 21 2017
Anne Belomyzy	72	June 22 1996
Anna Kosifad	61	June 23 1947
Paul Danilevich	47	June 24 1964
Zenaida Gromack	57	June 24 1974
John Laska		June 24 1985
Child Antonina Zelinsky	14 days	June 25 1910
Mary Pistey	72	June 25 1914
Anne Laska	95	June 25 2009
Irene Prigodich	87	June 26 2015
Child Peter Hashim	4 mo	June 27 1904
Child Mary Avhustinovich	11 mo	June 27 1910
Simon Hook	51	June 27 1942
Gabriel Rusinovsky		June 28 1926
Walter Grusha	58	June 28 1969
Mildred Sotnick	44	June 29 1956
John Selelyo	74	June 29 1981
Jacob Holovchuk	20	June 30 1910

ВѢЧНАЯ ПА́МЯТЬ

SUNDAYS & FEASTDAYS IN JUNE:

Pentecost

In the Old Testament Pentecost was the feast which occurred fifty days after Passover. As the Passover feast celebrated the exodus of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, so Pentecost celebrated God's gift of the ten commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai.



In the new covenant of the Messiah, the Passover event takes on its new meaning as the celebration of Christ's death and resurrection, the "exodus" of men from this sinful

world to the Kingdom of God. And in the New Testament as well, the Pentecostal feast is fulfilled and made new by the coming of the "new law," the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ. When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed as resting upon each one of them. And, they were all filled with "Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:1-4) The Holy Spirit that Christ had promised to his disciples came on the day of Pentecost. (John 14: 26, 15:26; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5) The apostles received “the power from on high,” and they began to preach and bear witness to Jesus as the risen Christ, the King and Lord. This moment has traditionally been called the birthday of the Church.

On Pentecost we have the final fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ and the first beginning of the messianic age of the Kingdom of God mystically present in this world in the Church of the Messiah. For this reason the fiftieth day stands as the beginning of the era which is beyond the limitations of this world, fifty being" that number which stands for eternal and heavenly fulfillment in Jewish and Christian mystical piety: seven times seven, plus one.

Thus, Pentecost is called an apocalyptic day, which means the day of final revelation. It is also called an eschatological day, which means the day of the final and perfect end (in Greek eschaton means the end). For when the Messiah comes and the Lord's Day is at hand, the "last days" are inaugurated in which "God declares: . . .I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." This is the ancient prophecy to which the Apostle Peter refers in the first sermon of the Christian Church which was preached on the first Sunday of Pentecost. (Acts 2: 17; Joel 2:28-32)

All Saints

The Sunday following Pentecost is dedicated to All Saints, both those who are known to us, and those who are known only to God. There have been saints at all times, and they have come from every corner of the earth. They were Apostles, Martyrs, Prophets, Hierarchs, Monastics, and Righteous, yet all were perfected by the same Holy Spirit.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to rise above our fallen state and to attain sainthood, thereby fulfilling God's directive to "be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16, etc.). Therefore, it is fitting to commemorate All Saints on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

This feast may have originated at an early date, perhaps as a celebration of all martyrs, then it was broadened to include all men and women who had borne witness to Christ by their virtuous lives, even if they did not shed their blood for Him.

The hymnology for the feast of All Saints also lists six categories: "Rejoice, assembly of the Apostles, Prophets of the Lord, loyal choirs of the Martyrs, divine Hierarchs, Monastic Fathers, and the Righteous…."

Some of the saints are described as Confessors, a category which does not appear in the above lists. Since they are similar in spirit to the martyrs, they are regarded as belonging to the category of Martyrs. They were not put to death as the Martyrs were, but they boldly confessed Christ and came close to being executed for their faith.

The order of these six types of saints seems to be based on their importance to the Church. The Apostles are listed first, because they were the first to spread the Gospel throughout the world. The Martyrs come next because of their example of courage in professing their faith before the enemies and persecutors of the Church, which encouraged other Christians to remain faithful to Christ even unto death.

Although they come first chronologically, the Prophets are listed after the Apostles and Martyrs. This is because the Old Testament Prophets saw only the shadows of things to come, whereas the Apostles and Martyrs experienced them firsthand. The New Testament also takes precedence over the Old Testament.

The holy Hierarchs comprise the fourth category. They are the leaders of their flocks, teaching them by their word and their example. The Monastic Saints are those who withdrew from this world to live in monasteries, or in seclusion. They did not do this out of hatred for the world, but in order to devote themselves to unceasing prayer, and to do battle against the power of the demons. Although some people erroneously believe that monks and nuns are useless and unproductive, St John Climacus had a high regard for them: "Angels are a light for monks, and the monastic life is a light for all men" (LADDER, Step 26:31).

The last category, the Righteous, are those who attained holiness of life while living "in the world." Examples include Abraham and his wife Sarah, Job, Ss Joachim and Anna, St Joseph the Betrothed, St Juliana of Lazarevsk, and others.

All Saints of America

On the second Sunday after Pentecost, each local Orthodox Church commemorates all the saints, known and unknown, who have shone forth in its territory. Accordingly, the Orthodox Church in America remembers the saints of North America on this day.

Saints of all times, and in every country are seen as the fulfillment of God's promise to redeem fallen humanity. Their example encourages us to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us" and to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). The saints of North America also teach us how we should live, and what we must expect to endure as Christians.

Although it is a relatively young church, the Orthodox Church in America has produced saints in nearly all of the six major categories of saints: Apostles (and Equals of the Apostles); Martyrs (and Confessors); Prophets; Hierarchs; Monastic Saints; and the Righteous. Prophets, of course, lived in Old Testament times and predicted the coming of Christ.

ALL SAINTS OF AMERICA

Our Fathers among the Saints:

TIKHON, the Confessor, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Enlightener of North America, (First Bishop of New York); INNOCENT, Metropolitan of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America; NIKOLAI, Bishop of Zhicha and Ochrid and JOHN, Bishop of Shanghai and San Francisco, (both who labored in America); RAPHAEL, Bishop of Brooklyn, Shepherd of the Lost Sheep in America; and MARDARIJE, Bishop of Libertyville.

The Holy Martyrs:

Hieromartyrs Archpriests JOHN KOCHUROV, of Chicago, Protomartyr under the Soviet Yoke and ALEXANDER HOTOVITSKY, of New York; JUVENALY of Alaska; the youth PETER the Aleut of San Francisco; and the New Hieromartyr Archpriest BASIL MARTYSZ.

Our Venerable Fathers:

HERMAN, Elder and Wonderworker of Alaska; and SEBASTIAN (DABOVICH), of San Francisco and Jackson.

The Righteous:

Archpriest ALEXIS TOTH, of Wilkes-Barre & Minneapolis, The Defender of Orthodoxy; and Archpriest JACOB NETSVETOV, The Enlightener of the Alaskan Peoples.

In addition to the saints listed above, we also honor those saints who are known only to God, and have not been recognized officially by the Church. As we contemplate the lives of these saints, let us remember that we are also called by God to a life of holiness.

SS. Peter and Paul

Saint Peter traditionally is regarded as the leader of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He was intimately connected with the earthly life and ministry of our Lord, and after His death tried to preserve the spiritual legacy left by Jesus to his followers.

In the course of his missionary journeys, Peter founded the Church in Antioch, where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. Saint Peter is regarded by the Church as the first leader of Antioch, and the present-day Patriarch of Antioch is his successor in that Apostolic See.

Although St. Peter had a special zeal concerning Christ and is considered the chief of the Apostles, he did not have any special authority over the other Apostles, but was only first in honor. When there were important questions in the Church, it was a Church council that decided them, and St. Peter himself was sent by a council to preach the Word of God. Christ said of Peter, "*You are Peter (petros) and upon this rock (petra) I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."*

Saint Paul is the greatest of the missionaries. The marvelous story of conversion on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-22) is hardly more striking than the rest of his life, one of the great adventure stories of history.

The account of Paul's missionary journeys and the letters he wrote to the Churches he founded, form an important part of the New Testament. He traveled over vast areas of the Roman world, preaching Christ, and fashioning the Christian Faith for all time. He called himself an Apostle, and he was the greatest of them, even though he was not of the Twelve Apostles.

According to St. John Chrysostom, St. Paul sought dishonor more than we seek honor, death more than we seek life, poverty more than we seek wealth, sorrows more than we seek joy, and that he prayed for his enemies more than others pray against their enemies. For him there was only one thing to be feared: that he might offend God! He desired nothing more in life than to please God and the whole meaning of his life was his love for Christ. Jesus called Paul, *"a chosen vessel, destined to carry My Name before princes and kings."*

Saints Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome, during the reign of the Emperor Nero, about 67 A.D.

What is the Fast of the Apostles and how to follow the Fast?

June 12, 2017
Father Christopher Knight
Holy Transfiguration Church,
Great Walsingham, Norfork, GB

Fasting:

M*onday, Wednesday, Friday:* Strict fast.
Tuesday, Thursday: Oil and wine permitted.
Saturday, Sunday: Fish, oil and wine permitted.

Orthodox Christians around the world observe four fasting seasons during the year. Two of these—the Great Fast for the forty days of Lent, and the Dormition Fast during the first fifteen days of August—are considered "strict" fasts. The other two are generally observed as "lesser" fasts: the so-called "Christmas Lent" or fast during the forty days before the Feast of the Nativity, and the Fast of the Apostles which occurs in June.

In America the Fast of the Apostles is probably the least well known but is among the oldest of Christian traditions. It is mentioned by St. Athanasius in the fourth century, and there are other testimonies to its existence very early in the history of the Church. The fast begins on the day after the observance of All Saints' Sunday, which falls one week after Pentecost.

Today the fast ends with the observance of the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, which is held on June 29. In earliest practice, however, the fast was probably not connected with the Feast of Peter and Paul. Rather, it was a time for fasting after the celebration of Pentecost and/or All Saints. Apparently, different traditions prescribed different lengths of the fast—whether for one week, several weeks, or even only one day. Today, the fast still has a variable length because of its connection to the date of Pentecost, and therefore of All Saints.

The date of Pentecost varies with the date of Holy Pascha (Easter), falling fifty days after Pascha. Therefore, the date of the Sunday of All Saints varies accordingly. This means that the length of the Fast of the Apostles also varies each year.

For those churches which follow the Old Calendar, the Fast can be very long (as long as 42 days) or very short (8 days), depending upon when Holy Pascha falls. For Orthodox churches which use the New Calendar, there are some years in which there is no Apostles' Fast at all.

There are different traditions regarding how strictly to follow the Fast. In most Orthodox traditions, the fast is not as severe as that during Great Lent. Fish, wine and oil are permitted on all days except Wednesday and Friday, which are strict fast-days throughout the year except immediately following the Great Feasts of the Lord. In other traditions, fish, wine and oil are permitted on Saturdays and Sundays during the Fast of the Apostles.

For faithful Orthodox today, the Fast of the Apostles can be an occasion for reflection upon the lives and example of the Holy

Apostles. On the Sunday of All Saints, we remember and celebrate the lives of all those who have gone before us in the faith: our fathers, forefathers, the apostles, preachers, evangelists, teachers, hierarchs and martyrs. The readings which are appointed for that day (Hebrews 11:33-40, 12:1-2, and Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30) remind us that countless worshippers of God have sacrificed their lives for the faith which we have inherited.

Following Jesus' admonition recorded by St. Matthew, the Apostles left behind their parents, their children, and their possessions in order to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to people who did not know Him. Christian missionaries around the world are still doing this today. During the Fast of the Apostles we are reminded to pray for them all, and for Orthodox mission everywhere. The Fast is also an occasion to remember that in Christ, we have a unity that goes far beyond our personal opinions, likes or dislikes. The Acts of the Apostles tells us that the Apostles themselves recognized this very early. The occasion was an argument which took place regarding whether the followers of Christ needed to continue to observe the Law of Moses. At first, Peter and Paul took different sides in the discussion.

Both Peter and Paul were Jews, but their personalities and backgrounds were very different. Peter, who was formerly a fisherman, was among the first of the disciples to follow Jesus. Presumably he was uneducated and probably spoke only Aramaic in the local Galilean dialect. Paul, on the other hand, was very well educated under Gamaliel, the most famous rabbi (teacher) of his time and spoke several languages.

Moreover, Paul—originally named Saul—was not among the Twelve Disciples. He even led a deadly persecution of Christians until he received an astounding vision of Christ while on the way to Damascus (Acts 9). The blinding vision changed his life forever. Thereafter he became an ardent witness to the risen Christ. But because of his former life, it was very difficult at first for the disciples to forgive and accept him.

Before very long, Peter and Paul became involved in the dispute about keeping the Law. Paul, who was preaching among Gentiles, taught that it was no longer necessary to keep the Law, because the purpose of the Law was to points to the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul even proclaimed that the Law had been nailed to the cross with Christ, for now we are justified by faith and not by following the Law (see Romans 10 and Galatians 3). Peter, however, was drawn towards the opinion of some Jews that although Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, the Law nevertheless should continue to be observed for all time.

Paul journeyed to Jerusalem to meet with Peter and the other disciples in order to settle the matter. Paul says that he opposed Peter to his face (Galatians 2:11 ff.). After some discussion it was agreed that Christians would no longer follow the Law, including practices like circumcision and the complex dietary laws given in the Books of Moses. However, they would continue to observe some of the restrictions of the Law regarding moral principles, and the eating of blood. It is significant that Peter did not simply decide to agree with Paul on these matters. Rather, he was given a vision from God in which it was declared that foods which were formerly declared to be "unclean" for all Jews, were now "clean" or acceptable (Acts 10). Thus, Peter realized that God was instituting a new order and way of life, and that to agree with Paul was a matter of obedience to Christ himself.

These events remind us to seek God when we have disagreements within the Church. This requires humility on our part, and the willingness to accept others even when we might not have agreed with them before. We let go of our own personal wishes or demands and pray for the good of the Church and for a recognition of the will of God for all of us together.

At the conclusion of the Fast, therefore, we celebrate Peter and Paul together. The icon of the Feast depicts the two men standing side-by-side, holding the Church together in their hands. This is a powerful symbol of the supernatural love for one another which is given by the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Spirit we have agreement and new life. For this reason, Orthodox Christians today can regard the Fast of the Apostles as one of the most important times of the year, a time to humble ourselves and pray for genuine love and unity in the Church around the world.

https://blog.obitel-minsk.com/2017/06/what-is-fast-of-apostles-and-how-to.html
https://holytransfigurationwalsingham.simdif.com/fasts_and_feasts.html

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH GLORIFIES THE COMPANY OF ALL THE SAINTS

By the Venerable Bede (+735AD)

Today, beloved brethren, we celebrate in one joyful solemnity the feast day of all the Saints. In their society Heaven exults, in their protection earth rejoices, in their triumphs the holy Church is crowned. The more endurance they showed in giving witness, the brighter is the glory of that witness; for, as the battle was fiercer, the glory of the fighters was greater. The many kinds of suffering enhance the triumph of martyrdom; and the greater the torments, the greater also the reward. Our Mother the catholic Church, spread far and wide over the whole earth, was taught in Jesus Christ her Head to fear neither insults, crosses, nor death. Grown stronger and stronger, not by resisting but by enduring, She has breathed the will to victory into all those whose containment in this earthly prison forms them into an opposing army, that they may be inspired to fight the good fight with no less ardent courage than these who have gone before.

O truly blessed Mother Church, basking in the glow of God's favor, adorned with the glorious blood of the victorious martyrs and clothed in the virginal white of an untarnished Orthodoxy! Her garlands lack neither rose nor the lily. We should each then strive, dear brothers, to gain the great dignity of these two honors, either the white crowns of virginity or the red of sufferings. In the Heavenly camps, both peace and ware have their garlands with which to crown the soldiers of Christ.

For the unutterable and immense goodness of God has seen to it that the time of labor and struggle should be neither prolonged nor long-drawn-out nor endless, but that it should rather be brief and, as we might say, momentary. For the struggles and the labors belong to this short and hard life, but the crowns and the rewards of merit to that which is eternal. The labors, then, will be ended quickly, but the rewards of merit will continue without end. And after the darkness of this world, we are to see the most radiant light and to receive a blessedness greater than the bitterness of all sufferings, as the Apostle testifies when he says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us."